

1 WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of printing a value bearing indicium (VBI), the method comprising the steps of:

5 generating a message digest by hashing relevant information;

generating a digital signature from the message digest;

10 generating a textual representation of the digital signature; and

generating a 2-D bar code comprising the relevant information.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the VBI is a ticket.

- 15 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the VBI is a coupon.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the VBI is a traveler's check.

- 20 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the VBI is currency.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein:

25 the representation of the digital signature further includes a right side;

the 2-D bar code further includes a left side; and

the representation of the digital signature right side is adjacent to the 2-D bar code left side.

- 30 7. The method of claim 1, wherein:

the representation of the digital signature further includes a top side;

the bar code further includes a bottom side; and

35 the representation of the digital signature top side is adjacent to the 2-D bar code bottom side.

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8. The method of claim 1, wherein:  
the representation of the digital signature further includes a bottom side;  
5 the bar code further includes a top side; and  
the representation of the digital signature bottom side is adjacent to the 2-D bar code top side.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein:  
10 the representation of the digital signature further includes a right side;  
the bar code further includes a left side; and  
the representation of the digital signature right side is adjacent to the 2-D bar code left side.
- 15 10. The method of claim 1, wherein the VBI is postage for a mail piece.
- 20 11. The method of claim 10, the relevant information including one or more of an indicium version number, an algorithm identifier, a certificate serial number, a postage security device manufacturer identifier, a postage security device model identifier, a postage security device serial number, an ascending register value, a postage amount, a date of mailing, a licensing postal code, a software identifier, a  
25 descending register value, and a rate category.
- 30 12. A data processing system adapted to print a VBI, the data processing system comprising:  
one or more processors; and  
one or more memories operably coupled to the processors and having program instructions stored therein, the processors being operable to execute the program instructions, the program instructions including:

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generating a message digest by hashing relevant information;

generating a digital signature from the message digest;

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generating a text representation of the digital signature; and

generating a 2-D bar code comprising the relevant information.

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13. The data processing system of claim 12, wherein:

the representation of the digital signature further includes a right side;

the 2-D bar code further includes a left side; and

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the representation of the digital signature right side is adjacent to the 2-D bar code left side.

14. The data processing system of claim 12, wherein:

the representation of the digital signature further includes a top side;

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the bar code further includes a bottom side; and

the representation of the digital signature top side is adjacent to the 2-D bar code bottom side.

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15. The data processing system of claim 12, wherein:

the representation of the digital signature further includes a bottom side;

the bar code further includes a top side; and

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the representation of the digital signature bottom side is adjacent to the 2-D bar code top side.

16. The data processing system of claim 12, wherein:

the representation of the digital signature further includes a left side;

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the 2-D bar code further includes a left right; and

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the representation of the digital signature left side  
is adjacent to the 2-D bar code right side.

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17. The data processing system of claim 12 wherein the data  
processing system is a closed metering system.

18. The data processing system of claim 12 wherein the data  
processing system is an open metering system.

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19. A data processing system adapted to print a VBI, the data  
processing system comprising:

a processor; and

a memory operably coupled to the processor and having  
program instructions stored therein, the processor being  
operable to execute the program instructions, the program  
instructions including:

generating a message digest by hashing relevant  
information;

generating a digital signature from the message  
digest;

generating a text representation of the digital  
signature; and

generating a 2-D bar code comprising the relevant  
information.

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20. The data processing system of claim 19, wherein:

the representation of the digital signature further  
includes a right side;

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the 2-D bar code further includes a left side; and

the representation of the digital signature right side  
is adjacent to the 2-D bar code left side.

21. The data processing system of claim 19, wherein:

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1           the representation of the digital signature further  
includes a top side;

          the 2-D bar code further includes a bottom side; and

5           the representation of the digital signature top side  
is adjacent to the 2-D bar code bottom side.

22. The data processing system of claim 19, wherein:

10           the representation of the digital signature further  
includes a left side;

          the 2-D bar code further includes a right side; and

          the representation of the digital signature left side  
is adjacent to the 2-D bar code right side.

15 23. The data processing system of claim 19, wherein:

          the representation of the digital signature further  
includes a bottom side;

          the 2-D bar code further includes a top side; and

20           the representation of the digital signature bottom  
side is adjacent to the 2-D bar code top side.

24. The data processing system of claim 19, wherein the VBI is  
postage for a mail piece.

25 25. The data processing system of claim 19, wherein the VBI is  
a ticket.

26. The data processing system of claim 19, wherein the VBI is  
a coupon.

30 27. The data processing system of claim 19, wherein the VBI is  
a traveler's check.

28. The data processing system of claim 19, wherein the VBI is  
35 currency.

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29. The data processing system of claim 19, wherein the VBI is postage for a mail piece.

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30. A computer-readable storage medium embodying computer program instructions for execution by a computer, the computer program instructions adapting a computer to provide a value bearing indicium to a user via a computer network, the computer program instructions comprising:

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generating a message digest by hashing relevant information;

generating a digital signature from the message digest;

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generating a text representation of the digital signature; and

generating a 2-D bar code comprising the relevant information.

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31. The computer-readable storage medium of claim 30, wherein: the representation of the digital signature further includes a right side;

the 2-D bar code further includes a left side; and

the digital signature right side is adjacent to the 2-D bar code left side.

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32. The computer-readable storage medium of claim 30, wherein: the representation of the digital signature further includes a top side;

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the 2-D bar code further includes a bottom side; and

the representation of the digital signature top side is adjacent to the 2-D bar code bottom side.

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33. The computer-readable storage medium of claim 30, wherein:

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the representation of the digital signature further includes a left side;

the 2-D bar code further includes a right side; and

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the representation of the digital signature left side is adjacent to the 2-D bar code right side.

34. The computer-readable storage medium of claim 30, wherein:  
the representation of the digital signature further includes a bottom side;

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the 2-D bar code further includes a top side; and

the representation of the digital signature bottom side is adjacent to the 2-D bar code top side.

35. A VBI comprising:

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a 2-D barcode including relevant information; and

a text representation of a digital signature generated from a message digest, the message digest generated using a secure hash algorithm to hash the relevant information.

36. The VBI of claim 35, wherein:

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the VBI is postage for a mail piece; and

the relevant information is mailing information.

37. The VBI of claim 36, the mailing information including one or more of an indicium version number, an algorithm identifier, a certificate serial number, a postage security device manufacturer identifier, a postage security device model identifier, a postage security device serial number, an ascending register value, a postage amount, a date of mailing, a licensing postal code, a software identifier, a descending register value, and a rate category.

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